

§ 136-18.03. Outside counsel.

(a) Intent. – It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Department of Transportation exercise the authority granted by this section to maximize operational and project delivery benefits attributed to the avoidance or successful defense of litigation.

(b) Authorization. – The Department of Transportation may engage the services of private counsel with the pertinent expertise to provide legal services related to any project undertaken by the Department. The Department shall supervise and manage the private counsel engaged under this section and, excluding legal services related to workers' compensation claims brought by Department employees, shall not be required to obtain written permission or approval from the Attorney General under G.S. 114-2.3. G.S. 147-17(c1) and G.S. 114-2.3(d) do not apply to this section.

(c) Performance Metrics. – The Department shall develop performance metrics to evaluate its utilization of in-house counsel and private counsel, to include the following:

- (1) A summary of new matters opened by legal area.
- (2) Case cycle times.
- (3) Resolution of cases.
- (4) A comparison of in-house costs to billable rates for private counsel.
- (5) The process for procurement for legal services.

(d) Report. – The Department shall provide a semiannual report to the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee and the Joint Legislative Justice and Public Safety Oversight Committee on the performance metrics set forth in subsection (c) of this section. (2015-241, s. 29.8(d); 2017-57, s. 6.7(c).)